

FILED

## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

February 23, 2022

for the

Nathan Ochsner, Clerk of Court

Southern District of Texas

United States of America

v.

James Blythe

Case No.

4:22-mj-415

Defendant(s)

## CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of January 21, 2022 in the county of Harris in the  
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

Offense Description

USC 18 2113(a)


Bank Robbery

USC 18 924(c)

Brandishing a Firearm During a Crime of Violence

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached affidavit.

☐ Continued on the attached sheet.

Complainant's signature

Larry Gibson, TFO

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me via telephone.

Date: 02/23/2022

Judge's signature

City and state: Houston, Texas

Christina Bryan, United States Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
HOUSTON DIVISION**

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, Larry Gibson, being duly sworn, do hereby depose and state:

1. I am a Sergeant with the Houston Police Department [HPD], duly appointed according to law and acting as such. I have been a Peace Officer with the HPD for over 26 years and am assigned to the Houston Police Department's Robbery Division as a member of the FBI Houston Division Violent Crime Task Force [VCTF]. The VCTF is comprised of Task Force Officers [TFO's] from the Houston Police Department, the Harris County Sheriff's Office, and Special Agents of the FBI. The VCTF is responsible for the investigation of, among other violent crimes, bank robbery. The facts contained in this affidavit are based upon information provided to me by other law enforcement officers, other witnesses, and my own personal knowledge. Since this affidavit is made for the limited purpose of supporting a Criminal Complaint, I have not set forth each and every fact learned during the course of the investigation. Rather, I have set forth only those facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause for the crimes charged. Unless otherwise indicated, where actions, conversations, and statements of others are related herein, they are related in substance and in part only.

2. Affiant and other members of the FBI VCTF have investigated or responded to two bank robberies in Houston, Texas and within Southern District of Texas that were committed by the same subject, later identified as James Blythe (BLYTHE).

3. Affiant responded to a bank robbery of a J.P. Morgan Chase Bank at 12017 Northwest Freeway on January 21, 2022. At the location, Affiant spoke with the victim, tellers Elmar Uicab

(UICAB). UICAB was working as a teller when a white male subject, later identified as James BLYTHE, wearing a black baseball style hat, sunglasses, black COVID style face mask, dark color long sleeve shirt, dark color pants and a black backpack, approached the counter.

According to UICAB, BLYTHE told him, "This is a robbery. Give me all your money," while displaying a pistol that he had concealed in his backpack. UICAB advised BLYTHE he was not logged in to the computer and could not give him any money. BLYTHE then left the bank without obtaining any money. Surveillance video shows BLYTHE leave the bank and walk to a single cab black Ford F-150 and flee the scene. BLYTHE was described as an elderly white male, in his mid to late 50's, approximately 5'9" - 6'00" tall. Affiant further reviewed the surveillance video and observed that the truck had what appeared to be black after-market side steps affixed to the truck, the word "SPORT" on the rear quarter panels, indicating the truck was a Sport trim model truck, and what appeared to be a white after-market applied sticker in the upper left corner of the tail gate.

4. Later on January 21, 2022, Affiant then responded to another bank robbery of a Capital One Bank at 1520 Studemont St. At the location, Affiant spoke with the victim teller, Dante Washington (WASHINGTON). WASHINGTON was working as a teller when an older white male suspect, later identified as James BLYTHE, approached his station. BLYTHE placed the same black backpack referenced above and displayed a semi-auto pistol, which he had concealed in the backpack. BLYTHE stated to WASHINGTON to give him the money and hurry up. WASHINGTON stated he was in fear for his life, at which point he removed the cash from his drawer and gave it to BLYTHE, totaling approximately \$5,110.00.

5. Affiant reviewed surveillance video and observed the suspect was the same male who attempted to rob the Chase Bank approximately one hour before, wearing the same clothing.



Surveillance video also shows the same single cab Ford F-150 that BLYTHE was seen getting into and fleeing in at the Chase Bank. Still images from the banks' surveillance videos were released to the media, requesting assistance to identify the suspect seen at both locations.

6. On January 27, 2022, Affiant received information from an anonymous Crime Stoppers tip identifying the male suspect as James Blythe, date of birth 09/29/1961. Affiant located a Texas driver's license photo for the listed name and date of birth under TXDL #08822971. Affiant placed photos of the suspect taken from the robbery surveillance cameras from both banks and compared them against the driver's license photo of BLYTHE. The similarities are as follows: height, weight, and very pale white skin tone on both photos. The suspect had his mask below his nose and while looking at BLYTHE's driver's license photo, Affiant observed that they appear to have the same shaped noses. Also both individuals in the photos are bald and the ears seem very similar. Affiant showed the surveillance photos and BLYTHE's photo to other investigators and they concurred that it appeared to be the same individual.

7. Affiant conducted a search of BLYTHE through TransUnion TLO Law Enforcement Data Base and found that BLYTHE was the registered owner of a black 2016 Ford F-150 Sport single cab truck, bearing Texas license plate HHZ5857. Affiant searched the License Plate through the NVLS and Flock Law Enforcement Data bases and the images captured of BLYTHE's truck were compared to the surveillance video. Affiant observed BLYTHE's truck had the same side steps affixed to the truck, a white sticker affixed to the upper left corner of the tail gate, and the "sport" sticker on the side of the truck – matching the surveillance photos from the banks.

8. Affiant also learned that in 2007, BLYTHE was arrested for robbing two banks and that one of those banks was located at 12017 Northwest Freeway, the same location as the Chase Bank in your Affiant's investigation. The Defendant was convicted in one of those bank robberies and served time in the Texas Department of Corrections. Affiant also noted that the modus operandi for the two banks your Affiant is investigating match exactly to the two banks BLYTHE was arrested for in 2007. In those cases and in these incidents, BLYTHE used his own vehicle but covered the license plates with black tape.

9. An arrest warrant was issued for BLYTHE and he was subsequently arrested by officers on February 16, 2022. Affiant was able to interview BLYTHE who admitted when shown photos of the suspect's truck used in the robberies that it looked like his truck. BLYTHE denied involvement in the two robberies but did give Affiant permission to look through his cellular phone. Affiant scrolled through the text messages that were sent and received on January 21, 2022 - the date of the two robberies - and observed several pages of texts in which BLYTHE was conversing with another male about robbing both listed banks. BLYTHE mentioned not wanting to injure bystanders in the lobby, not coming out of the bank empty handed, and concerned about cops being in the bank lobby. BLYTHE also mentions both robbed banks by name and also their locations. The time of the texts were immediately before and after the robberies were committed.

10. Based on the foregoing, your Affiant believes there is probable cause to believe that on January 21, 2022, James BLYTHE used a firearm to attempt to take money belonging to the Chase Bank located at 12017 Northwest Freeway and on January 21, 2022 used a firearm to take money belonging to the Capital One Bank located at 1520 Studemont Street, both located in the Southern

District of Texas, the deposits of which are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation,  
in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(a) and 924(c).

  
TFO Larry Gibson, Houston Police Department/ FBI VCTF

Subscribed and Sworn to me by telephone on February 23, 2022, and I find probable cause.

  
Hon. Christina Bryan  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE